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Voluntary Public

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GAIN Report Number:

Iraq

Post: Baghdad

Iraq Lifts Ban on Poultry Imports from Arkansas

Report Categories:

Poultry and Products

Pest/Disease Occurrences

Agriculture in the News

Competitor

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Report Highlights:

Sustained advocacy by USDA staff resulted in Iraq's Ministry of Agriculture lifting the ban on imports of poultry from Arkansas. The Council of Ministers (COM) issued the ban on July 30, 2013, in response to a reported case of Pathogenic Avian Flu in that state.

General Information:

On September 16, 2013, the Government of Iraq's (GOI) Council of Ministers (COM) lifted the ban on poultry imports from the state of Arkansas. FAS Baghdad and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) regional office in Cairo, Egypt, successfully advocated with the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and COM to lift the ban, which was negatively impacting U.S. exports of poultry to Iraq. The ban was implemented in July 2013 in response to the reported case of pathogenic Avian Flu in the state of Arkansas.

USDA's efforts, resulting in the ban being lifted, are encouraging exporters to do business with Iraq, as is evidenced by the increase in U.S. poultry exports, up 31 percent in January 2013 – September 2013, from the same period in 2012. Post anticipates that the poultry industry will see an annual growth rate of 25 percent over the next two years, benefitting U.S. producers and exporters in Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Alabama, and Georgia. Feedback from importers indicates that the United States will continue to be a preferred provider for poultry leg quarters since U.S. products are price competitive compared with those of competing suppliers.

FAS is working to address reports from U.S. companies which continue to face challenges clearing Arkansas poultry through Iraqi customs, part of a pattern in which central government trade policy directives are not implemented promptly or by all GOI agencies.

U.S. poultry meat exports to Iraq in fiscal year (FY) 2013, October 2012-September 2013, reached a record level of \$104.8 million, ranking Iraq as the tenth largest export market for U.S. poultry meat.